Foreword

All praise is due only to Allaah. We laud Him and beseech His aid and beg forgiveness only from Him and believe in Him and rely solely on Him. We seek salvation in Him from the evils of our inner selves and the vices of our actions. There is none to misguide one whom Allaah intends to guide. I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship but Allaah, the One who has no partner. I also testify that Hadhrat Muhammad ρ is the faithful servant and the Last Rasul of Allaah. May Allaah Ta'ala's mercy be on him, his family and his Sahabaah τ and may He bless them and raise their status.

This is an excellent exposition of the hadith, "Hold fast to my Sunnah as well as the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa who will come after me," by Hahdrat Muhammad Idris Khandhelvi (A.R) (1317-1394 / 1900 – 1974) who was the Sheikh of Tafseer and Ahadeeth at Darul Uloom Deoband (India) for 9 years. He then migrated to Lahore – Pakistaan where he taught in Jamiah Ashrafiyyah. He wrote many valuable books on various topics. Amongst his famous works: (1) At Taliqus Sabih – commentary of Mishkaat (4 volumes published); (2) Tafsir Mariful Quraan (9 volumes); (3) Siratul Mustafa (3 volumes); (4) Sharh Bukhari; (5) Aqaaid ul Islaam – translated by us.

This small treatise displays his intense knowledge and understanding of Deen.

May Allaah grant us the ability to be from the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat in these times of trials and tribulations.

A. H. Elias (Mufti)

The Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah in the Light of the Qur'aan and Sunnah

By Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Idris Khandhelevi (A.R)

Hadhrat Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi رحمه الله has deduced from the verse of the Qur'aan "**And He will certainly grant** *(great)* **strength to the Deen that He has chosen for them**"[1] that whatever happened during the period of the righteous Khilaafah was approved by Allaah. Other scholars have proven this using the Hadith in which Rasulullaah ρ states, "Hold fast to my Sunnah as well as the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa who will come after me."

When Rasulullaah ρ informed the Sahabah ψ that conflict will arise after he passes away, they asked him what he advised them to do during such times. It was then that Rasulullaah ρ instructed them with the words, "Hold fast to my Sunnah as well as the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa who will come after me." In this Hadith, Rasulullaah ρ has issued the command that (1) his Sunnah as well as (2) the Sunnah of the Khulafaa Raashideen need to be held fast on to. The command is similar to the verses of the Qur'aan in which Allaah says, "Obey Allaah and the Rasool ρ" and "Believe in Allaah and His Rasool ρ." Both Allaah and Rasool ρ are included in the command to be obeyed and to be believed in. It is therefore Waajib (compulsory) to believe in and to obey Rasulullaah ρ just as it is Waajib (compulsory) to believe in and to obey Allaah. It is therefore not possible for anyone to claim that the same ruling as applies to Allaah the Creator cannot apply to the creation. Although the status of Rasulullaah ρ really is unlike that of Allaah, the commands to believe in and to obey applies equally to both.

In a like manner, just as the Hadith *"Hold fast to my Sunnah as well as the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa who will come after me"* announces that it is Waajib (compulsory) to adhere to the Sunnah practices of Rasulullaah ρ, it is also Waajib (compulsory) to adhere to the practices of the Khulafaa Raashideen. Although there exists a world of difference between the rank of Rasulullaah ρ and the Khulafaa Raashideen, the command to follow their ways applies equally. A person would therefore be opposing the Hadith should he say that it is not necessary for him to follow the ways of the Khulafaa Raashideen.

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[1] Surah Noor, verse 55.

There is a principle in Arabic stating that whenever a statement is made about something, the attribute/s mentioned thereafter lend to the reasons for the statement. Now we find that after the statement issuing the command to follow the Sunnah of Khulafaa Raashideen, there are four attributes mentioned, viz. the word *Khulafaa* , the word *Raashideen*, the word *Mahdiyyeen* (rightly guided) and the phrase 'who will come after me'. The word *Khulafaa* is the plural of *Khalifah*, meaning 'successor' of 'the one taking the place of Rasulullaah ρ'. Now even common sense will tell one that just as it is Waajib (compulsory) to follow Rasulullaah ρ himself, it will therefore also be necessary to follow anyone who succeeds him.

Then the word *Raashideen,* which is the plural of the word *Raashid*, refers to a person who treads the right path. When the Qur'aan mentions something briefly, it also mentions it is detail elsewhere. Elaborating on the meaning of the word, Allaah says:

Know well that the Rasool of Allaah is in your midst. There are many matters regarding which you will be placed into difficulty if he were to obey you people concerning them. However, Allaah has made Imaan beloved to you, has made it beautiful within your hearts and has made kufr, sin and disobedience abhorrent to you. Such people *(with these qualities)* **are rightly guided (the Raashideen).** [1]

Therefore, the Khulafaa Raashideen refer to those who love Imaan, who abhor acts of Kufr, sin and disobedience to Allaah. Now, let alone the Shari'ah, even common sense will tell one that it is necessary to follow people who have been described as *Raashideen*.

Thereafter, the word *Mahdiyyeen* appears, which is the plural of *Mahdy* (مهدي), meaning 'rightly guided'. Unlike the word *Muhtady* (مهتدي), which refers to someone who himself treads the right path, the word *Mahdy* refers to a person whom Allaah has guided. The status of the *Mahdy* will therefore be higher than that of the *Muhtady* because his guidance comes from none other than Allaah.

This is like the two word in the Qur'aan مُخْلِسين (*Mukhliseen* with a Kasra) and مُخْلَسين (*Mukhlaseen* with a Fatha). The word مُخْلِسين (*Mukhliseen* with a Kasra) refers to people who make an effort to carry out their deeds sincerely for Allaah, whereas the مُخْلَسين (*Mukhlaseen* with a Fatha) are those whom Allaah has selected to carry out deeds solely for His pleasure, regardless of whether these people actively intend it or not.

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[1] Surah Hujuraat, verse 7

It is stated in the book *Izaalatul Khifaa* that Hadhrat Umar τ was on his way to assassinate Rasulullaah ρ when he was not a Muslim. Knowing that he was to enter the fold of Islaam, Allaah revealed this to Rasulullaah ρ, who prayed thus, "O Allaah! Strengthen Islaam with one of the two Umars." Although Hadhrat Umar τ was not proceeding towards Rasulullaah ρ with the intention of accepting Islaam, Allaah had decided this. Hadhrat Umar τ was therefore from amongst the مُخْلَصين (*Mukhlaseen* with a Fatha) and not from amongst the مُخْلِصين (*Mukhliseen* with a Kasra). Allaah had chosen him. It is with reference to Hadhrat Ibraheem υ as well that Allaah says in the Qur'aan, "**Verily, he was from amongst those slaves of Ours who were the** مُخْلَصين **(Mukhlaseen with a Fatha)**".

The Khulafaa Raashideen were therefore from amongst the *Mahdiyyeen* rather than the *Muhtadeen*. They were guided by Allaah. Therefore, will it not then be Waajib (compulsory) to follow them?

The fourth attribute that Rasulullaah ρ mentioned in the Hadith is that the Khulafaa Raashideen *"will come after me"*. This refers to coming after Rasulullaah ρ in time as well as in status. Rasulullaah ρ was therefore saying that since their status is second only to his, they also need to be followed as he was followed. It is therefore necessary for the people of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah to follow the ways of Rasulullaah ρ as well as those of the Khulafaa Raashideen. This is what is meant by the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah.

I would now like to make brief mention of something related to the knowledge imparted at our Deeni Madaaris. Understand it like this. Rasulullaah ρ was the fountainhead of knowledge and wisdom and knowledge flowed like a fountain from his lips. The Sahabah ψ then took this from him and then passed it on to the Taabi'een. Now, bear in mind the Hadith in which Hadhrat Abu Dharr Ghifaari رحمه الله asked Rasulullaah ρ about the number of **Ambiyaa** عليهم السلام**.** Rasulullaah ρ replied that they numbered **124000.** Hadhrat Abu Dharr τ then asked how many of these were **Rasuls?** Rasulullaah ρ informed him that they were **313** in number.

Rasulullaah ρ also mentioned in another Hadith that **seventy thousand** members of his Ummah **will enter Jannah** without reckoning.

Now after considering these three Ahadeeth, consider the following Hadith: Rasulullaah ρ said, "The Ulema are the heirs of the Ambiyaa عليهم

السلام." Consider the following (albeit weak) Hadith, which some scholars have classified as fabricated: Rasulullaah ρ said, "The Ulema of my Ummah are like the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام of the Bani Israa'eel."

Now remember that Rasulullaah ρ is the final Nabi and he said, "I have been granted the knowledge of all people of the beginning of time and all people of the end of times.

It now occurs to one that Rasulullaah ρ was a conglomeration of all the knowledge and wisdom that all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام possessed. The **Sahabah ψ** who participated in the **Battle of Badr numbered 313,** the same number as the Rusul عليهم السلام who came in the past. The Sahabah ψ and the Taabi'een are unanimous about the fact that the best of all the Sahabah ψ were the veterans of the Battle of Badr, which was the very first battle fought in Islaam. **It was then in the expedition** to Tabook that the Sahabah ψ numbered **seventy thousand[1].** Furthermore, the Muhadditheen[2] make it clear that there were **124000 Sahabah ψ** present with Rasulullaah ρ on the occasion **of the Farewell Hajj.**

It occurred to me that the Sahabah ψ are really an impersonation of the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام. Just as there were 124000 Ambiyaa عليهم السلام, there were 124000 Sahabah ψ. Just as there were 313 Rusul عليهم السلام amongst the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام, the veterans of Badr also numbered 313. As for the 70000 who participated in the expedition to Tabook, these were the people Rasulullaah ρ referred to when he said that seventy thousand members of his Ummah will enter Jannah without reckoning.

Now after Allaah took Rasulullaah ρ away from this world with all the knowledge he possessed, the Sahabah ψ took over and it was then the group of the Taabi'een who walked along with the Sahabah ψ. When Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله was born in the year 80 A.H., there were a mere handful of Sahabah ψ still alive. The books of Ahadeeth mention the names of only about seven or eight Sahabah ψ who were alive then. Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله had the opportunity of meeting these Sahabah ψ, thereby acquiring himself the title of Taabi'ee. When the year 110 A.H. arrived, all the Sahabah ψ were lifted from this world. Thereafter, the very senior Taabi'een and also those closest to them were also taken away. Eventually, only the junior Taabi'een were left. At this stage, the era of Rasulullaah ρ, the era of the Sahabah ψ and

[1] Haafidh Iraqi has stated this in his *Alfiyyah*

[2] Haafidh Ibn Hajar رحمه الله and others.

even the era of the Taabi'een had come to an end. The Shari'ah was complete and the words and deeds of Rasulullaah ρ had reached all of the Ummah. Even the words and deeds of the Khulafaa Raashideen had reached the Ummah. This was the culmination of the verse: "**And He will certainly grant** *(great)* **strength to the Deen that He has chosen for them**"[1]

The knowledge of the Shari'ah that existed had been perfected at that stage. Allaah now intended that the knowledge that came from Rasulullaah ρ should be compiled. The attention was now focussed on the knowledge of the Shari'ah.

The Shari'ah comprises of two parts; (1) the words and (2) the meaning. The Qur'aan comprises of two parts; (1) the words and (2) the meaning. The Ahadeeth comprises of two parts; (1) the words and (2) the meaning. Allaah therefore raised up two groups amongst the Ummah; the Muhadditheen and the Fuqahaa. While the Muhadditheen safeguarded the words of the Ahadeeth and conveyed the words of the Shari'ah to the people, the Fuqahaa explained the meanings of these to them.

When Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله was about thirty years of age, Allaah inspired him to explain the meanings of the Shari'ah. In his class of approximately 40 Ulema, there sat Fuqahaa as well as Soofis. He gathered them all to codify the science of Fiqh. Imaam Tahaawi رحمه الله writes that amongst this panel of forty Ulema were Imaam Abu Yusuf رحمه الله, Imaam Muhammad bin Hasan رحمه الله, Imaam Zufar رحمه الله and Imaam Hasan bin Ziyaad رحمه الله. Imaam Abu Yusuf رحمه الله taught Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal رحمه الله and Imaam Muhammad bin Hasan رحمه الله taught Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een رحمه الله. Both Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal رحمه الله and Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een رحمه الله were amongst Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله's teachers. Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een رحمه الله used to write the books that Imaam Muhammad رحمه الله used to dictate.

Imaam Muhammad رحمه الله also taught Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله and it was after the demise of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله that Imaam Muhammad رحمه الله went to learn from Imaam Maalik رحمه الله.

It was with this panel of forty Ulema that Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله codified the science of Fiqh, starting from the chapter of purity and proceeding to the end. Amongst the books that Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله dictated were *Fiqhul Akbar* and *Fiqhul Awsat*. It was Imaam Abu

[1] Surah Noor, verse 55.

Haneefah رحمه الله opposed to the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazila and Khaarijah sects and **was the first to codify the science of *Kalaam*, just as he was the first to codify the science of Fiqh.**

In his book *Tabyeedhus Saheefah fi Manaaqib Imaam Abi Haneefah* رحمه الله, Imaam Jalaalud Deen Suyuti رحمه الله states that Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله was the first to codify the science of Fiqh and that is was after seeing the Fiqh of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله that Imaam Maalik رحمه الله wrote his *Mu'atta*. Thereafter, Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله came and founded his Fiqh after seeing the Fiqh of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله and then the *Mu'atta* of Imaam Maalik رحمه الله was written. The Fiqh of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله therefore benefited Imaam Maalik رحمه الله, Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله and Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله.

The king of the time once decided to appoint Ulema as Chief Justice and issued a warrant for his men to arrest Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله, Hadhrat Mis'ar bin Kudaam رحمه الله, Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri رحمه الله and Qaadhi Shareek رحمه الله. These four were friends and once came together to discuss how to free themselves of the task that the king wanted to place on them. "May I mention what I anticipate will happen to each of us? I shall be put to test, Mis'ar here will emerge from the dilemma, Sufyaan will go missing and eventually Shareek will become the Chief Justice.

When the king called Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله to accept the post of Chief Justice, he submitted, "But I am not worthy of the post." "But you certainly are," the king insisted, "You will therefore have to accept the post." Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله then took an oath that he would not accept the post and further said, "If I am truthful about not being worthy of the post, then do excuse me and if I am lying, then a liar is certainly not deserving of the post. Why then appoint a liar to the post." The king then had him imprisoned.

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri رحمه الله went into hiding. Hadhrat Mis'ar رحمه الله was extremely pious and together with being a student of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله, he was also his friend. His narrations are also found in Bukhaari. When he was called before the king, he asked the king, "How are you?" When the king replied that he was fine, Hadhrat Mis'ar رحمه الله asked further, "And how are your donkeys and other animal in the royal stables?" Hearing this question, the king became furious and commanded, "This man is mad! Get him out of here!" This was what he wanted and he left with glee.

It was great Ulema like these who passed on to us the teachings of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah and it is their teachings that are taught in our Madaaris. People asked, "Which Hadith says that you should follow Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله?" We may ask, "Which Hadith states that you should follow Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله or Imaam Muslim رحمه الله?"

They then argue, "But you also agree that Bukhaari Shareef is the most authentic book after the Qur'aan?" We say, "But of course! It is regarded as such because the Ulema and righteous people of the Ummah accept it to be so, just as they all accept Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله , Imaam Maalik, Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله and Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله. This acceptance by the Ummah is in itself a source of proof.

A Hadith appears in Tirmidhi in which Rasulullaah ρ said, "On the Day of Qiyaamah, this Ummah will occupy 80 of the 120 rows of all the nations of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام." Rasulullaah ρ also added that he will be the most followed of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام. Rasulullaah ρ will therefore have two thirds of all the followers of the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام. When discussing this Hadith, Hadhrat Shah Sahib رحمه الله remarked, "Such is the situation with Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله as well. His followers amount to two thirds of the Ummah, with the remaining third comprising of the followers of Imaam Maalik, Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله and Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله.

Dear brothers! Allaah has brought this knowledge to us and it is the knowledge of the Sahabah ψ and the Taabi'een that is being imparted in our Madaaris. Now let us arrive at a further point. All the Imaams and Muhadditheen agree that it is not possible to act outside the circle of the Sahabah ψ. It is Waajib (compulsory) to act on something about which the Sahabah ψ were unanimous. The Sahabah ψ and Taabi'een served to elucidate the teachings of Rasulullaah ρ. Hadhrat Mujaddid رحمه الله writes that Rasulullaah ρ was the best of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام, who was a conglomeration of the virtues of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام. Similarly, the Qur'aan declares that the Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ is the best of all Ummahs, which would therefore be a conglomeration of the virtues of all the other Ummahs. Whoever believes in Rasulullaah ρ has believed in all the previous Ambiyaa عليهم السلام as well. Therefore, the person who disbelieves in Rasulullaah ρ is the worst of all Kuffaar because he has thereby disbelieved in all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام.

Following the four Madhaahib entails following all of the Shari'ah, following all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام and therefore includes the blessings of all

the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام. Dear brothers! My advice to you is to remember that this knowledge that Allaah is granting you through the blessings of these Madaaris is the essence of the knowledge of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام and of the Shari'ah. As far as possible, never stray outside the circle of the Sahabah ψ.

The people who reject Fiqh, do accept Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله. Let me therefore tell you about Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله. It was his practice to start a chapter with what he called the *Tarjamtul Baab*. He quoted the statements of the Shari'ah and the Taabi'een to make their understanding clear. The fact that Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله filled these headers with the statements of the Sahabah ψ and the Taabi'een makes **it evident that none can understand the Deen properly without the Sahabah ψ and the Taabi'een. Just as the Ulema of the Ummah agree that there are six most authentic books of Ahadeeth, they also agree that there are four Imaams who are to be followed, and no fifth.**

Ulema have recorded that after the four Imaams, Imaam Ibn Jareer Tabari رحمه الله also claimed to be capable of Ijtihaad, but he was not followed. Scholars differ about whether Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله was a Muqallid or a Mujtahid. While some claim that he followed Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله, others opine that he was a Mujtahid in his own right. Assuming that he was a Mujtahid like Imaam Sufyaan Thjowri رحمه الله and Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak رحمه الله were. The question now arises: Why are their Madhaahib not mentioned in the books as the four Madhaahib are? Why is there no one in the world claiming to be their follower?

It is evident that while the words of the Ahadeeth are heard from the Muhadditheen, the meanings of the Ahadeeth are had from the likes of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله and Imaam Maalik رحمه الله. **Imaam Tirmidhi رحمه الله states in his Jaami, "It is the Fuqahaa who know best the meanings of the Ahadeeth."**

Hadhrat Sheikhul Hind رحمه الله explained it brilliantly when he said that the Qur'aan states, "Obey Allaah and obey the Rasool ρ." Now while the Shari'ah comprises of words and meaning, it is the meaning that is the objective since **obedience to Allaah and His Rasool ρ can be practised only when the meanings are understood.** The words are the means to this objective. Since it is the Fuqahaa who explain to us these meanings, it is necessary for us to follow them. It is not the words that need to be followed.

There is a person who teaches the Tafseer Jalaalayn, who is a qualified Aalim, but not a Haafidh. On the other hand, there is another person who may be an Asharah Qaari but is not an Aalim and does not understand the Tafseer of the Qur'aan. Now which of these persons' word will one rely on with regard to the meaning of the Qur'aan? **In a like manner, the word of Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله and others cannot be preferred over that of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله.**

Furthermore, these Muhadditheen like Imaam Bukhaari رحمه الله and the others were all students of Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله and Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een رحمه الله , who were, in turn, students of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله's students. Imaam Shaafi'ee رحمه الله was the student of Imaam Muhammad bin Hasan رحمه الله. The Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah therefore gave the Muslim Ummah the wealth of Deen as well as the wealth of the world because the empire the Muslim Ummah possess is because of the Khulafaa Raashideen. It was during the reigns of Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ, Hadhrat Umar τ and Hadhrat Uthmaan τ that the Muslim empire grew so vastly with consecutive conquests and victories. **No new territories were conquered during the reign of Hadhrat Ali τ.**

I once said in a lecture that the Shias condemn Hadhrat Umar τ for allegedly usurping land in Fidak, which can, at the most, be two miles long, with perhaps a thousand or two trees and worth maybe two hundred thousand or two million. However, who was it that conquered the land of Iran, the produce of which the Iranians are still eating today without yet paying the price? The conqueror of this land was none other than Hadhrat Umar τ.
A friend of ours who has since passed on related to us, "I owned a large buffalo and would regularly give its milk to an old woman. Her neighbour once informed me that the old lady gets up every night for Tahajjud and curses me. I could not believe that she could be doing this because I was not at fault, so he invited me to stay the night with him and to hear it for myself because the roof of the old lady's house was attached to the upper storey of his house. That night, we heard the woman curse the owner of the buffalo and his buffaloes. Convinced that she was cursing me, I approached her the following morning and asked her whether it was me whom she was cursing. Without any pretence, she admitted that it was indeed myself whom she was cursing. 'But what have I done?' I asked, 'I even send you milk every day.' She replied, 'Because you have the buffalo and I do not.'"

Such is the condition of the Shias, who drink from the milk supplied by Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ and Hadhrat Umar τ, yet curse them in the same breath. The knowledge of Deen prevalent in the Ummah is from the efforts of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah, so too are the lands of the Muslims, including the lands of Pakistan and Turkey. Whoever the ruler may be in Iran, the land was still originally conquered by Hadhrat Umar τ.

I pray that Allaah keep us all steadfast on the ways of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah.

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Mufti Afzal Hoosen Elias
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